



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



**Twenty-third Global Meeting of Regional
Seas Conventions and Action Plans**
Barbados, 20- 23 November 2023

Annotations to the agenda

Introduction

The global meetings of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans organized by UNEP is a coordination mechanism of the eighteen (18) regional seas conventions and action plans. This meeting provides a platform for adoption of global strategies for cooperation, channeling UNEP political and programmatic support to the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, particularly in areas complementary to the UNEP Programme of Work and strengthening linkages between the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and other relevant global conventions and agreements.

The 23rd global meeting of the Regional Seas Programme builds on the outcomes of the 22nd annual meeting held from 25- 27 May in Seychelles hosted by the Secretariat of the Nairobi Convention. The 22nd meeting kicked off the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2022-2025, deliberated on the resolutions endorsed at the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) such as the historic resolution to end plastic pollution and forge an international legally binding agreement by 2024. The meeting also discussed Regional Seas Programme' s strategic involvement and contribution to the discussions on an internationally legally binding instrument under the Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), as well as the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The 23rd global meeting will therefore develop a common action to implement the Regional Seas Strategic directions 2022-2025, including the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, support to INC on Plastics, BBNJ and the World Ocean Assessments, strategic engagement of the Regional Seas at UN Ocean Conference in collaboration with the host government of France, Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The meeting will also deliberate on the UNEP Regional Seas Programme turning 50 years in 2024 among others.

Organizational matters

Item 1. Welcome and opening remarks

The opening of the meeting will take place at 8:30 AM (Barbados time) on Monday 20 November 2023.

The meeting will be opened by Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP via a video recording highlighting the main issues before the meeting.

At the opening, the meeting will hear welcoming address by Hon. Adrian R. Forde, Rph, the Minister of Environment, National Beautification and the Blue and Green Economy of Barbados.

Thereafter Mr. Johan Robinson Head, Ecosystem Integration Branch, Ecosystems Division will deliver his statement.

This will be followed by introductions by the Executive Secretaries and representatives of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

Item 2. Introductions and organization of the meeting

Ms. Nancy Soi, Programme Management Officer, Regional Seas Unit will introduce the objectives of the meeting and lead the meeting into adopting the agenda.

Item 3. Update on progress from the last meeting

Thereafter, Ms. Soi will present the progress update from the 22nd Global Meeting on the Regional Seas Programme.

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

Item 4. Presentation on common action to implement Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2022-2025

Mr. Robinson will follow with a presentation on progress made to implement the Regional Seas Strategic Directions (RSSD) 2022-2025. The presentation will be a compilation and synthesis of the 18 Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plan's RSSD reports to find commonality in implementation.

Item 5. Statements by Representatives of the Regional Seas Secretariats on their plan to support implementation of the RSSD 2022- 2025

The Executive Secretaries and representatives of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans will be invited to make brief statements on progress made to implement the Regional Seas Strategic Directions as follows: (5 minutes each)

- a) **Abidjan Convention** (Mr. Abdoulaye Diagana)
- b) **Antigua Convention** (Mr. Magner Adolfo Estrada)
- c) **Barcelona Convention** (Ms. Tatjana Hema)
- d) **Black Sea** (Ms. Irina Makarenko)
- e) **Cartagena Convention** (Mr. Christopher Corbin)
- f) **COBSEA** (Mr. Mahesh Pradhan)
- g) **CPPS** (Mr. Cristian Martis)
- h) **OSPAR** (Mr Dominic Pattinson)
- i) **Nairobi Convention** (Mr. Dixon Waruinge)
- j) **NOWPAP** (Mr. Yegor Volovik)
- k) **PERSGA** (Mr. Maher Amir)
- l) **SACEP** (Ms. Rokeya Khaton)
- m) **SPREP** (Ms. Anastacia Stowers)
- n) **Tehran** (Mr. Mateusz Benko)

Lunch break:75 minutes

Item 6. Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – (Session facilitator: Ms. Tatjana Hema)

The facilitator of the session, Ms. Tatjana Hema, Coordinator UNEP MAP Barcelona Convention, will introduce the session and invite the speakers.

- a. The first presentation will set the scene and provide an overview of the Kunming-Montreal GBF goals and targets and key development by the CBD Secretariat to support its implementation. The presentation will be made by Mr. Joe Appiott from CBD Secretariat – **12 minutes.**
- b. A second presentation on overview of UNEP’s Programmatic support to member states on the Kunming-Montreal GBF will be made by Ms. Marieta Sakalian from UNEP – **10 minutes.**
- c. A third presentation on a draft strategy for the Regional Seas Programme to support member states to implement the Kunming-Montreal GBF will be delivered by consultant Mr. Mikhail Paltsyn – **10 minutes.**

Thereafter, Ms. Hema, will lead and moderate the plenary discussions on the Kunming-Montreal GBF implementation plan by the RSCAPs. The sessions will also be used to provide feedback towards supporting finalization of the RSP strategy to support countries achieve the K-M GBF by 2030 – **60 minutes.**

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

- d. Continued plenary discussions – **60 minutes.**

Reception dinner

All participants and guests are invited to attend the reception dinner at 18.30, hosted by UNEP in collaboration with the Government of Barbados at the Courtyard Marriott in Bridgetown, Barbados.

DAY 2 – 21 November 2023

Second day

At 8.00, Mr. Robinson will open the second day with a recap of the first day’s sessions and presentations.

Item 7. Ocean Governance

The second day sessions will be focused on ocean governance and the topics for discussion include the plastic treaty, the BBNJ, the Third UN Ocean Conference, financing, and partnerships.

Item 7.1 Plastic treaty (Session facilitator: Mahesh Pradhan, Coordinator, COBSEA)

The session will begin with thematic presentations with a focus on the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution, including in the marine environment.

- a. The first presentation will be an update on the progress made by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution by Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp from the INC Secretariat – **12 minutes.**

- b. The second presentation by Mr. David Ogden of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Secretariats on sound management of chemicals and waste with a focus on plastics – **10 minutes**
- c. The last presentation will be an overview of regional seas work on plastics and potential roles by consultant, Ms. Fadilah Ali – **10 minutes**.

The session will conclude with a plenary discussion on plastic pollution, moderated by Mr. Mahesh Pradhan of the COBSEA Secretariat. The session will provide feedback and ideas to reshape the draft document on potential role of regional seas Programme supporting implementation of the plastics treaty once adopted. – **110 minutes**

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

Item 7.2 BBNJ (Session facilitator: Dixon Waruinge, Coordinator, Nairobi Convention)

The session will have two in one thematic discussion. The first part will focus on BBNJ Agreement, understanding the treaty, obligations to member states, and the next steps to support adoption and ratification. The second part of the session will discuss the World Ocean Assessments and linkages with the regional assessments conducted by the regional sea’s conventions and action plans and how the two assessments could feed into each other, i.e., looking at complementarities in topics covered, regional and global experts, among others.

- a. The first presentation will be on the new agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) by Ms. Charlotte Salpin and Mr. Fernando Cabrera Diaz from UNDOALOS – **12 minutes**.

Thereafter, Mr. Waruinge will open the floor for moderated discussions aimed at identifying potential role and areas for collaboration between UNDOALOS, UNEP and Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

- b. The second presentation will be on the World Ocean Assessment, presented by Ms. Charlotte Salpin and Mr. Fernando Cabrera Diaz from UNDOALOS – **12 minutes**.

This will also be followed by plenary discussion on the World Ocean Assessment, moderated by Mr. Dixon Waruinge from Nairobi Convention, will conclude the session. The session will also seek to provide a possible coherence and harmonized approach between the world ocean assessment and the regional assessments by the regional seas’ conventions and action plans.

Lunch break: 75 minutes

Item 7.3 Third UN Ocean Conference in France, 2025 (Session facilitator: Dominic Pattinson, Executive Secretary OSPAR)

The facilitator of the session, Mr. Pattinson, will introduce the session and the speaker, Ambassador Olivier Poivre d’Arvor, French Ambassador for the Poles and Oceans, who will be joining online. Ambassador Olivier Poivre d’Arvor will provide an update on-going the preparations from Lisbon to Nice towards the 3rd UN Ocean Conference and propose strategic role of the regional seas conventions and action plans in supporting the preparation and at the conference in Nice.

- a. The presentation on the Third UN Ocean Conference, roadmap from Lisbon to Nice, and the possible role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans by the French Ambassador for the Poles and Oceans, Mr. Olivier Poivre d’Arvor – **15 minutes**

This will be followed by plenary discussion on UNOC 3 moderated by Mr. Dominic Pattinson of OSPAR. – **75 minutes**

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

Item 7.4 Financing and partnerships on Ocean governance (Session facilitator: Lorenzo Galbiati)

This session will be facilitated by Lorenzo Galbiati, GEF International Waters Technical Officer, FAO. The session will provide an overview and share information on existing financial mechanisms to support ocean governance accessible to the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and possible partnerships for project development and fundraising.

- a. The first presentation will be updates and opportunities by the Global Environment Facility, presented by Ms. Isabelle Vanderbeck, UNEP GEF International Waters Portfolio manager – **10 minutes**. She will be connecting online.
- b. Second presentation will be on the Global Fund for Coral Reef (GFCR), presented by GFCR Secretariat – via virtual recording with support of Francis Staub from the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Secretariat – **10 minutes**.
- c. The third presentation will on the Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP) by representative of CORDAP Secretariat via virtual recording with the support of Francis Staub from the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Secretariat – **10 minutes**

Thereafter, Mr. Lorenzo will facilitate moderated discussions on financing and partnerships for RSCAPs in ocean governance– **30 minutes**.

Item 8. Meeting with the UNEP administered RSCAPs: 60 minutes total

The day will end with a session dedicated to the RSCAPs administered by UNEP. The session will discuss issues around MEA support on administration and finance and legal support.

- a. The MEA Unit’s corporate services by Ms. Isabel Martinez of UNEP Corporate Services Division, MEA Unit
- b. The legal support from UNEP’s Law Division, presented by Mr. Mamadou Kane of UNEP

Day 3: 22 November 2023

Third day, opening session.

The third day will open at 8.00 with a recap of the second day of sessions by Mr. Johan Robinson of UNEP.

Item 9. Small Islands Developing States and Least Developing Countries (Session facilitated by Christopher Corbin, Coordinator, Cartagena Convention)

The session will provide an update on progress in supporting member states to implement the SAMOA pathway including outcomes of the regional consultations on the priorities for the SIDS towards the 4th international conference on small islands developing states to be held in May 2024 in Antigua and Barbuda.

Theme presentations will be presented as follows.

- a. An update on UNEP’s preparatory work towards the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States, May 2024 in Antigua, and Barbuda by Ms. Heidi Savelli of UNEP – **10 minutes.**
- b. Experiences from Pacific SIDS by Ms. Anastacia Amoa-Stowers of SPREP – **10 minutes**
- c. Experiences from Caribbean SIDS by Mr. Vincent Sweeney and Ms. Susana Perera Valderrama of Cartagena Convention – **10 minutes**
- d. Experiences from African SIDS by Mr. Dixon Waruinge of Nairobi Convention and Mr. Abdoulaye Diagana of Abidjan Convention – **10 minutes**

Thereafter, Mr. Corbin will facilitate moderated discussions on support to SIDS and LDCs by the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to implement the SAMOA pathway. – **90 minutes**

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

Item 10. Blue/Ocean based economies (session facilitated by Piero Mannini, Secretary of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (FAO))

The session will be moderated by Mr. Piero Mannini. The session will discuss the new strategic guide on blue economy by UNEP for the Regional Seas Programme and sharing experience on implementation of blue economy from Barbados Ministry of Environment, National Beautification and the Blue and Green Economy.

- a. The first presentation on an overview of the strategic guide on blue economy by UNEP for the Regional Seas Programme presented by Nancy Soi of UNEP Regional Seas Programme – **10 minutes.**
- b. The second session will focus on the experiences on blue economy work with a case study of Barbados by Mr. Rickardo Ward from the Government of Barbados – **10 minutes.**

Thereafter, Mr. Manini will facilitate plenary discussions on the next steps to support implementation for the strategic guide on blue economy for the Regional Seas Programme taking to consideration the lessons learnt and experiences from Barbados. **85 minutes**

Lunch break: 75 minutes

Item 11. UNEP Regional Seas Programme @50 and United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) participation (session facilitated by Irina Makarenko, Black Sea Commission)

The session moderated by Ms. Makarenko, will discuss the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Regional Seas Programme in 2024 and related celebrations at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 6).

- a. The first presentation will be on the 50th anniversary and participation of RSP at UNEA 6 presented by Mr. Johan Robinson – **10 minutes.**
- b. The second presentation will be on UNEA 6 strategic participation of Regional Seas Programme by Mr. Mamadou Kane of UNEP Law Division – **10 minutes.**

Thereafter Ms. Makarenko will facilitate plenary discussions on UNEP Regional Seas Programme turning 50 years in 2024. The meeting will reflect on achievements of the Programme and vision and agree on how to document the products for showcasing during UNEA 6. This include was to present the evolution and vision – repositioning the Regional Seas Programme and revamping the vision of the Programme beyond 50 years – **70 minutes.**

Coffee/tea break: 30 minutes

Item 12. Strengthening coordination role of UNEP on the Regional Seas Programme (session facilitator Nancy Soi, Programme Management Officer, UNEP)

The session will be facilitated by Ms. Soi of UNEP. The session seeks to strengthen the coordination of the Regional Seas Programme by UNEP, increase interaction, increase opportunities for shared learning, lessons learnt from projects, governance mechanisms, organizing intergovernmental meetings including COPs, IGMs, capacity building opportunities between UNEP and the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

- a. The results of the survey on strengthening coordination of the Regional Seas Programme will be presented by Ms. Aidan McKean of the Regional Seas Programme – **10 minutes**.

Thereafter, Ms. Soi will facilitate plenary discussions on strengthening coordination role of UNEP among the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. – **50 minutes**

Item 13. Wrap- up and closure of the meeting: 30 minutes total

The final session of the day is the closure of the meeting with Mr. Johan Robinson of UNEP leading the wrap up and closure. The session includes the following agenda items:

- a. Date and venue for the next meeting – **5 minutes**
- b. Meeting outcomes – **10 minutes**
- c. Any other business - **10 minutes**
- d. Closure of the meeting – **5 minutes**

Item 14. Side event by ICRI: Turning the Tide for Coral Reefs and the importance of regional activities: 60 minutes total

Mr. Francis Staub from the International Coral Reef Initiative will present a side event at 5:30 on the importance of regional activities in coral reef restoration and conservation.

Day 4: 23 November 2023

15. Field Excursion

A field excursion has been organized with the support by the Government of Barbados to the Richard Haynes Boardwalk, Bridgetown Sewage Treatment Plant, and the National Botanical Gardens.